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What Gen. Taylor Will Be Doing

By Marquis Childs

IN APPOINTING ~~Gen.~~ Maxwell D. Taylor to be his military assistant President Kennedy has taken a step that can have a very large bearing on the future course of the Administration. It is, above all, Taylor's experience and background that the President will call upon not only for the trials just ahead but in shaping future policy for the long pull.

The immediate need is on Berlin. As the first U. S. Commander, Berlin, from 1949 to 1951 he did an outstanding job. Without bluster or brag he set the firm line for American and Allied rights in the zones of occupation. Taylor showed more understanding than most professional soldiers of the West Berliners and their difficult position on an island in the Communist sea.

In explaining to the Joint Chiefs of Staff with whom he cleared the appointment in order to impress upon them that this would mean no cutting across their authority, the President said he would in the first instance want General Taylor to coordinate all intelligence reports coming into the White House. This is a considerable undertaking and, as the President recognized, it calls for someone with a thorough knowledge of what has gone before.

This is in a sense what Mr. Kennedy has missed in his White House staff. He could not himself master the flow of raw material from the various agencies even though at times he has seemed to be trying to do just that.

TAYLOR'S first assignment, as coordinator of intelligence, suggests what he will be called upon to do if and when the crisis over Berlin abates. That is to try to bring order and reason into the whole intelligence operation. What with overlapping and duplication it has grown to staggering size.

Having been called upon to inquire into the working of the Central Intelligence Agency following the Cuban disaster, Taylor has some idea already of what should be done. What with the CIA, the Army, Navy and Air Force, the total number of persons engaged directly and indirectly in intelligence is said to be three times the total personnel of the Department of State together with the Foreign Service. The waste of money and manpower can readily be imagined.

Another reason for Taylor's appointment is his deep conviction of the urgent need to increase America's capacity to fight limited wars that stop short of nuclear bombing and even of tactical nuclear weapons. Over this issue he broke with the Eisenhower Administra-

Immediately following his retirement he wrote his book, *The Uncertain Trumpet*, which is perhaps the most cogent and concise case for the need to be able to fight brush-fire wars short of massive retaliation."

The Uncertain Trumpet greatly impressed the then Senator Kennedy. So did an article which Taylor wrote in the spring of 1956 for *Foreign Affairs* magazine in which he advocated a flexible program of deterrence that would include limited-war capability as well as hydrogen bombs delivered by bombers and missiles. The Defense Department ordered the article drastically revised if it were to be published, and Taylor withdrew it, including it after his retirement as an appendix to his book.

TAYLOR argues in his book the need to recognize the limitations on atomic retaliatory forces. This naturally won him the hostility of the Air Force. It is incredible to ourselves, to our Allies, and to our enemies, he writes, that we would use such forces for any purpose other than to insure our national survival.

Saber-rattling was never part of Taylor's equipment in his rise to four-star rank and Chief of Staff of the Army. When the overwhelming opinion in the Administration in late February, including that of Secretary of State Dean Rusk, was for intervention in Laos with SEATO forces including those of the United States, Taylor was asked for his view. He is said to have advised against such intervention, pointing out that Laos has a thousand-mile-long border with Communist China and North Viet Nam across which unlimited manpower could be poured. This coincided with the warnings of others and the President decided against that undertaking.

Taylor argued in his years as Chief of Staff the urgent need for what he called certain "quick fixes," headed by the need for improved planning and training for limited war. His recommendations were successfully resisted then. Perhaps now, belatedly, they will be carried out.